United Nations S/2004/515

Security Council

Distr.: General
25 June 2004

Original: English

## Letter dated 21 June 2004 from the Permanent Representative of Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to draw your attention to the statement on Equatorial Guinea issued by the Presidency of the European Union on behalf of the European Union on 17 June 2004 (see annex).

I would be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Richard **Ryan**
Permanent Representative of Ireland
to the United Nations

04-40535 (E) 290604

## Annex to the letter dated 21 June 2004 from the Permanent Representative of Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: English, French and Spanish]

## Statement on Equatorial Guinea issued by the Presidency of the European Union on behalf of the European Union on 17 June 2004

The European Union welcomes the forthcoming opening of the new Parliament of Equatorial Guinea after the holding of parliamentary and municipal elections on 25 April 2004. The European Union believes that the process leading to the opening of the new parliamentary session contains both positive and negative aspects which the new Government should consider in the future.

The European Union considers that the electoral campaign was conducted in a peaceful way and allowed political parties to carry out their activities in an atmosphere of relative normality. The European Union welcomes the Government's decision to introduce the use of transparent ballot boxes. Nevertheless, the Spanish parliamentary observers present in the country detected important irregularities that distorted the electoral process in violation of the agreements between the Government and the democratic opposition reached in Mbini in August 2003.

Therefore, while recognizing that some progress was made in the process of transition to democracy, the European Union believes that the elections failed to constitute a Parliament reflecting the political diversity of the society of Equatorial Guinea, given that the opposition was not adequately represented in the elections.

The European Union wishes to welcome the participation of the opposition, which will be represented in the new Parliament only by two members of Parliament, once they have finally decided to accept the two seats allocated in the official results.

The European Union calls upon the authorities of Equatorial Guinea to allow this opposition to participate in the parliamentary sessions, exercising their freedoms and rights, and for them to be provided with the necessary material means. The European Union also considers that they should be granted free and substantive access to the public media so that they can inform the whole of the population about their activities.

The European Union hopes that the Parliament will be in a position to exert its monitoring role over the executive, that it will contribute to implementing a programme of good economic governance, equitable distribution of national wealth, and sound and transparent management of oil revenues, in the furtherance of a sustainable development policy that benefits the whole population of Equatorial Guinea.

Finally, the European Union expresses its commitment to cooperate with the Government of Equatorial Guinea with the goal of promoting a transition to a full democracy within a framework of respect for fundamental rights and freedoms. The European Union welcomes the letter from the Government of Equatorial Guinea dated 14 April 2004, inviting the Commission to dispatch a mission to Equatorial Guinea to discuss those issues. The signing of the national indicative programme for

the ninth European Development Fund is dependent on the willingness of the authorities of Equatorial Guinea to observe those principles in an internationally accepted manner.

The candidate countries Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey, the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro, and the EFTA countries Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, align themselves with this statement.